



## **NEWS FROM NOAA**

**NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

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Contact: Jim Teet,  
(801) 524-5692, Ext. 226  
Tanja Fransen  
(406) 228-2850

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### **NOAA'S NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DECLARES MONTANA'S ROOSEVELT COUNTY AND FORT PECK RESERVATION STORMREADY**

Officials from NOAA's National Weather Service today praised Roosevelt County and the Fort Peck Tribes in northeast Montana for completing a set of rigorous warning criteria necessary to earn the distinction of being StormReady. The incorporated communities of Wolf Point, Poplar, Brockton, Culbertson, Bainville and Froid are included as being StormReady.

"Fort Peck Tribes and Roosevelt County were among the first in the nation to have approved FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plans," said Tanja Fransen, warning coordination meteorologist at the weather forecast office in Glasgow, Mont. "Becoming StormReady was one of the mitigation activities they wanted to accomplish because it encourages communities to take a new, proactive approach to improving local hazardous weather operations and public awareness."

The nationwide community preparedness program uses a grassroots approach to help communities develop plans to handle local severe weather and flooding threats. The program is voluntary and provides communities with clear-cut advice from a partnership between the local National Weather Service office and state and local disaster and emergency services coordinators. StormReady started in 1999 with seven communities in the Tulsa, Okla., area. Today, there are more than 1000 StormReady communities in 48 states. Montana now has 12 counties, 24 communities and a tribal nation that are StormReady.

"Disaster preparedness is a top priority for Roosevelt County and this has brought us another step closer to making sure our county is prepared," said Dennis Brockmeyer, Roosevelt County disaster and emergency services coordinator. "We worked with State Farm insurance to receive a \$5,000 grant that allowed us to make NOAA Weather Radio receivers available at our local government facilities and other public places throughout the area where people gather."

Arlyn Headdress, disaster and emergency services coordinator and tribal councilwoman for the Fort Peck Tribes stated, "Our residents have faced several disasters over the past few years from drought to flooding, severe storms and blizzards. Working towards becoming StormReady has allowed us to review our planning and make updates that will benefit the community in the future."

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Recognition ceremonies were conducted today for both the county and the tribe. Bob Diaz, a division chief from the National Weather Service Western Region office, and Julie Adolphson, meteorologist-in-charge of the National Weather forecast office in Glasgow, presented recognition letters and special StormReady signs to the county commissioners and to the tribal council. The StormReady status will remain in effect for three years, at which point the county, the tribe and the incorporated communities will go through a renewal process.

“Every year, around 500 Americans lose their lives to severe weather and floods,” said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. David L. Johnson, director of NOAA's National Weather Service. “More than 10,000 severe thunderstorms, 2,500 floods and 1,000 tornadoes impact the United States annually, and hurricanes are a threat to the Gulf and East Coasts. Potentially deadly weather can affect every person in the country. That’s why NOAA's National Weather Service developed the StormReady program.”

To be recognized as StormReady, a community must:

- establish a 24-hour warning point and emergency operations center;
- have multiple ways to receive severe weather warnings and forecasts and to alert the public;
- create a system that monitors weather conditions locally;
- promote public readiness through community outreach and education; and
- develop a formal hazardous weather plan, which includes training severe weather spotters and holding emergency exercises.

NOAA’s National Weather Service is the official source of weather data, forecasts and warnings for the United States and its territories. NOAA's National Weather Service operates the most advanced weather and flood warning and forecast system in the world, helping to protect lives and property and enhance the national economy.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation’s coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of System (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners and nearly 60 countries to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes.

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On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

NOAA’s National Weather Service: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov>

StormReady sign and program information: <http://www.stormready.noaa.gov>

National Weather Service forecast office in Glasgow: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/ggw>

